

Christina Howie Lindsay - by William Lindsay, Son

Christina Howie, the eldest child of William Howie and Jane Blackwood, highly respected people but poor in things of the world so it made it necessary for her to go out to work at an early age. She worked mostly on farms where cows were kept and butter and cheese were made, and where servant girls also were required to help in harvesting the crops and feeding the cows besides milking and making butter and cheese and taking it to market.

Mother saw hard times after she came to Heber. She went in the harvest fields and bound wheat and the older boys hired out to help get means for the family to live on. She traded some clothing for a house to live in and for a cow. In the fall of 1863 mother was married to George Muir as a plural wife and had two sons, John and George Muir. She got one of the first sewing machines in the valley, a Wheeler & Wilson, and did sewing for many others. She went to the head of Echo Canyon when the Western Pacific railroad was being built and cooked for some twenty men, with help of Mary Muir who later became my wife. Later she went to Evanston, Wyoming with George Muir and kept boarders and saved enough money and with the help of her boys to build her rock house in Heber. The boys quarried the rock in Lake Creek Canyon and engaged Daddy Averett as mason and we helped with the mortar. We also helped with the inside walls. Patrick Carroll did the carpenter work. By all working together we finished the house during the summer of 1865.

Mother acted as a midwife for many years traveling from town to town in a buggy or wagon in all kinds of weather.

She took up a homestead in Center Creek and lived on it to prove up and get the government title. She then divided it between her two sons John and George Muir. She was a small woman and a willing worker at any kind of work she could do.

She was very independent and would not let anybody do work for her as long as she was able to do it herself and up until she was 82 years she was active and able to do her own housework. She did some Temple work and was a firm believer in all the Church doctrines. She never faltered or lost courage through her life. All honor to her name. All her sons and daughters were living that came to Utah with her at the time of her death in Heber but Elizabeth and Samuel. She died 25th July 1906. I was in England on a mission at the time.

Getting To Utah

When the letter came from Liverpool telling us passages for all our family had been secured on the sailing ship John J. Boyd & telling us to sell everything we would not need on the journey & come to Liverpool inside of 3 days to get on board the ship which would sail April 22nd 1862. This letter caused great rejoicing. Brother Sam ran around the house shouting boys that is the best letter ever came to our house. This was the first ship that season & dear Mother's words had come literally to pass. We received the letter on Thursday and on Saturday the 19th of April 1862 we left Kilmarnock on the train to Glasgow where we were met by Bro. Robert Sands who took us in charge and helped us get our luggage on board a small steamboat bound for Liverpool. It was late in the afternoon when we started on the trip down the river Clyde which is a very fine river. We passed Greenock where many large ships are built & went out into the open sea. We were on the open deck of the ship & without any shelter along with other passengers. No chance to sleep but being seasick we could not sleep anyway. This was our first seasick experience.

Two of the passengers got into a fight right close by & one called the other a "son of a b" that was the first time I ever heard those words. It was quite windy & the sea was rough & nearly all were seasick, but we landed in Liverpool about ten next morning & got on board the ship John J. Boyd where there were 700 Mormon emigrants getting assigned to their berths & bunks preparatory to starting on the trip across the Atlantic ocean 3000 miles of water. Of course there was some bustle confusion in getting all properly

placed. Then the ship was divided into 6 wards & a man was appointed to look after each ward. James S. Browd was President of the company & John G. Lindsay and Joseph C. Rich were his counselors. It was really wonderful to see how soon all got settled down & knew their own places, their rights & privileges on the ship. There was a large double stove or galley where all the cooking had to be done for 700 people so you may see it was hard to get much cooking done. We sailed from Liverpool on the 22nd of April 1862 bound for New York & had what was called a fairly good passage over the sea. However we had one quite hard storm that shook things up some but no great damage was done. Of course the ship was being tossed about and was lurching badly. Two women right close to us were very much excited & crying. I could not help smiling although I had to keep a hold of the bunk to keep from being thrown out. I thought it absurd to suppose that a ship with 700 Saints bound for Zion could possibly sink. I, even then as a boy of fifteen, had faith we would be preserved. Which we was & all except one man child that died & were buried at sea, came safely to land at New York on the 4th of June. Captain Thomas seemed to be a very fine gentleman but 2 of the mates were very cruel & tyrannical with the ships crew & stowaways. We saw many fish of different kinds while crossing & nearly all had several sieges of seasickness. Very few escape this sickness.

We were landed at Castle Gardens, the Emigrant home in New York, and stayed there 2 days & nights. The sights were beautiful as we came into New York. But the men on guard had hard work to keep sharpers from getting amongst us emigrants. Leaving New York we were marched through the streets to where the horse cars took us to the Hudson river where we went on a steamboat up to Albany. There we were shut up in a railroad round house till a train came to take us farther on our journey. We went by Niagara Falls & saw that mighty stream foaming white as it tumbled over the precipice. We also passed through Detroit & Chicago & up the Mississippi to Hannibal.

Then on the Hannibal & St. Joseph railroad to St. Joseph Missouri The civil war was in full swing & there were soldier guarding the bridges as we were close to the Confederate lines. We had very little food to eat on the journey from New York. The ships fare was bad enough but it was better than none. And we went hungry most of the 10 days coming to Florence Nebraska. At St. Joseph we were transferred to a steamboat to go up the Missouri river some 250 miles. We were some 3 days on the boat (just an open boat no shelter from the heat or cold), but we got some of the scraps left from the boat hands's table. We had to sleep just any place on the deck & sometimes had to move in the night. Old Robert McKnight was at the landing at Florence to meet us. He had a small basket of scones & a bucket of milk & you may be sure we were glad to see him & relieve him of the scones & milk.

Our family were quartered in a small log cabin very likely built by some of the Pioneers. While at Florence we got our food supplies from the Church store & fared very well. The Montgomerys came two weeks later & mother invited them to share our little cabin & we all lived there 5 weeks longer waiting for the teams to come from Utah to haul our luggage across the plains. While here we were visited by the worst storm of thunder, lightning, wind & rain that I ever saw. Two men were killed & several injured in that storm. While there I helped to herd a bunch of Church cattle on the hills. About the 20th of July Captain Homer Duncan's ox train arrived & we were assigned to John Turner's wagon. This was a strange & a wonderful sight to us who had never seen oxen hitched to wagons. And the teamsters shouting & cracking their big long whips it sure was all very strange to us at first.

As quickly as possible we started on the dreary tramp of 1000 miles. Tents were provided one for every wagon & a man appointed to see that the tents were properly staked down each night & placed in the wagon next morning. An average of 12 persons slept in each tent & had all their belongings in one wagon. Prayers were held in the camp at night & morning all were called together for that purpose at the sound of the bugle & the Captain gave counsel & issued orders for the day. Flour & bacon was furnished to everybody but of course every family had to do their own cooking. Bake skillets & frying pans & camp kettles were furnished. Most of the time we could get wood to make the fires. But it was really a great trial for many people to cook their food outdoors in the heat, the wind & the smoke But each helped the others wherever they could & we got along very nicely considering the peculiar conditions they were placed in.

I think we left Florence on the 22nd of July on the wearisome journey & on the 24th we reached the Platte River & there we celebrated the entering into Salt Lake Valley of Brigham Young & the first company of Pioneers by having a dance on a nice sandy place where the river had overflowed & the emigrants, especially the girls, took part for the first time in the American dances. Fifteen to sixteen miles was an average days travel. Everybody was warned to keep close to the wagons on account of danger from Indians who were seen nearly every day in large numbers. The oxen stirred up a lot of dust & the people sweating with the hot days & in the dust naturally got quite dirty before the days drive was done. Some of the older people got quite tired not being used to walking & everybody had to walk that could. The teams had all the load they could haul with the luggage & small children & some who were sick at times. Most of the time they laid over either all day or a part of Saturday to give the women folks a chance to wash the clothes & also on Sundays if we were where the oxen could get plenty of grass to eat.

Of course when prayers were held in a public way every morning it was in the nature of a meeting when instructions & counsel were given according to what was considered necessary from day to day. Thus we traveled on from day to day. In the evenings with ox yokes for seats we sat around the campfires & sang songs or told stories. The emigrants would tell of their homes & friends they had left for the Gospel's sake & their voyages over the sea & some of the things they had experienced thus far on the way to the gathering place of the saints & the teamsters in turn would tell of the places & conditions in Utah & of the dangerous trip they had coming to meet them to bring them over the plains into the valleys of the mountains. Some had violins, accordions, concertina's or other musical instruments so we had all kinds of entertainments & most of the people enjoyed themselves in the evenings & forgot the hard traveling in the dust thru the day. There was some sickness & several deaths while on the way and those who died had to be buried without coffins & with very little ceremony as the train had to keep moving on every day possible.

We had a sample of what was called a stampede but fortunately no one was injured. For some cause at times those stupid slow oxen back on the plains would take fright at some trivial thing & every ox whether lying down or hitched to a wagon would start almost in a moment to run like deers perfectly crazy & very seldom could they be stopped until they were completely exhausted.

I will state that a ox train usually consisted of fifty or more teams & wagons, four yoke or eight oxen on each wagon & of course a man called a teamster to drive each wagon. There was a captain to each train & an assistant, also 4 to 6 night herders, these all had a horse each. The captain & assistant looked after the general welfare of the whole especially finding suitable camping places each night where feed & water could be got for the oxen as grass was their only feed. The herders job was to watch over the oxen during the night & bring them into the corral in the morning where each teamster picked out his own oxen, yoked them up & hitched them on to the wagons. The corral was formed by the wagons when coming in to make a camp one half of the wagons were driven to the right & the other half to the left leaving an open space between where the oxen could be yoked up for the days travel.

Prayers were held each morning in the corral, before the oxen were brought in the morning. There was a man appointed to each wagon to put up the tent for the sleeping place of those whose luggage belonged in that wagon & in the morning he took the tent down & placed it & all the bedding, pans & kettles in the wagon ready for starting usually by 7 a.m. Everything was done in a systematic way & good order prevailed in the Mormon camps. By traveling in large companies & using caution & good judgement & always being on their guard the Indians seldom gave them any trouble. We often saw herds of buffalo at a distance but none very close by.

We traveled on the north side of the Platte River up what was called Fort Laramie passing Scotts Bluffs & Chimney Rock they were on the other side of the Platte River. At Fort Laramie we crossed the Platte traveled up the south side to Platte bridge we forded the river at both places in fact I saw no bridge & of course all had to wade & the water was quite deep. From there we went several days drive over to Independence Rock on the Sweetwater & traveled up that stream for a week or more passing Devils Gate & Rocky Ridge on the way up. Then came over the South Pass past Pacific Springs, Little & Big Sandy on

to Green River another quite deep stream to wade. Then on by Hams Fork & up to Fort Bridger. Then over very steep Quakingasp Hill on over to Bear River passed Yellow Creek & Needle Rocks & on into Echo Canyon & traveled down it where we struck the Weber River. Up the Weber past Coalville, Hoytsville, & Wanship to Rockport, then up 3 mile Canyon & on over to Silvercreek which was then a really silvery clear stream. Here we left the train & came over into what was then called Provo Valley, where I have spent 65 years of a happy, busy, industrious life.



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